



PARISH PROFILE

The Episcopal Church

Valle Crucis, NC



The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross is a community of faith called by God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, serving those in need, both near and far, and seeking to share God's love through Eucharistic worship, prayer, and compassionate ministry.

Our Mission Statement

WELCOME HOME TO HOLY CROSS



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A Letter from the Bishop

Dear Prospective Candidates:

Thank you for your interest in the Diocese of Western North Carolina and, particularly, your interest in Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Valle Crucis. The congregation will tell you their story in this Profile. Please allow me to tell you a bit of the story of our Diocese.



Our diocese consists of 28 counties in Western North Carolina. We are made up of 62 parishes and six summer chapels and worshipping communities. Around 15,000 people make up the Diocese. Although we have several larger churches, many of our towns and parishes are smaller in size, but just as strong in faith. We are, of course, situated in or near beautiful mountains, streams, and valleys.

That is a demographic view of the Diocese. We are so much more. Our mission statement is: "Walk in the Way. Widen the Walls. Wake up the World." This mission statement guides all we do to serve God's people and share the love of Christ.

Our clergy are collegial, friendly and committed to serve our Lord. If you are called to serve here, you will participate in Fresh Start to help you become acclimated to the Diocese and have a support group among your fellow presbyters, including a mentor.

We are a diocese of faithful lay people and clergy striving to better know Christ and to serve God in many, many ways. Our parishes are sometimes very different, but they are all drawn together by a call to serve and a sense that they are part of the wider Body of Christ.

May God bless you and the Discernment Committee as you begin a process of mutual discernment.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin



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Our Vestry & Staff

Nina-Jo Moore (2025 - completing term), Senior Warden
Darby Logan (2025), Junior Warden
Jennifer Browning (2025 - completing term)
Doris Boulton (2026)
Catherine Morton (2026 - completing term)
Angela Williams (2026)
Radie Armstrong (2027)
Derek Eggers (2027)
Sis Kinney (2027)

Vestry Officers

Jan Skopecek, Treasurer
Dedy Traver, Secretary

Our Staff



The Rev. Robert Hartmans
Interim Rector



Shane Watson
Music Director



Ahren Koenig
Parish Administrator



PARISH PROFILE

Prayer for Holy Cross

*A*lmighty and ever living God, look favorably upon Holy Cross parish during this time of transition as we search for a new rector. We pray for the life of our parish, that we may continue to be guided by your love and strengthened in our mission to serve you. We pray for the Discernment Committee and for hearts and minds open to your spirit. We pray for the priest whose name is known to you alone, that he or she be open to your call. Give us grace to follow where you would lead us and grant us your peace.

Who We Are

*H*oly Cross is a Christ-centered, close-knit community of faith that offers an active, loving, and welcoming place of worship, ministry, and Christian fellowship. We are committed to a meaningful worship service

and celebrating the love of Christ through the Holy Eucharist, hearing the Word, and embracing all who enter our doors. This parish is truly characterized by energy and a dedication to helping others through a variety of ministries, strong lay leadership, and active participation of all. We are known as “a little church that helps people.” We are a diverse family who treasure and enjoy each other and our connections to our surrounding communities.

“A little church
that helps people”



Photo credit: Angela Williams



PARISH PROFILE

Worship

First and foremost, Holy Cross is a place of worship. We gladly receive those from all walks of life. **All** are welcome to share the Holy Eucharist at our table. The liturgy, celebration of the Holy Eucharist, challenging sermons, inspiring sacred music, the beauty and history of this simple stone church all combine to offer an inspirational and compelling place to worship and draw closer to God.

Holy Cross

Between Labor Day and Memorial Day, our regular Sunday worship schedule includes a quiet service at 8:30 a.m. with no music. The 11:00 a.m. service has music and hymnody, with a social hour after each service in our parish hall. The combined average Sunday attendance in 2024 was 89; adding in our streaming video audience brings the total to 157. Adult Christian Education is from 9:45 - 10:15. Attendance varies seasonally due to some members wintering elsewhere.



During the summer months, only the 11:00 service is held at Holy Cross, with an average in-person attendance in 2024 of 65, with in-person and streaming attendance of 125. A quiet Eucharist with healing prayer, led by the Daughters of the King and open to all, has traditionally been held on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

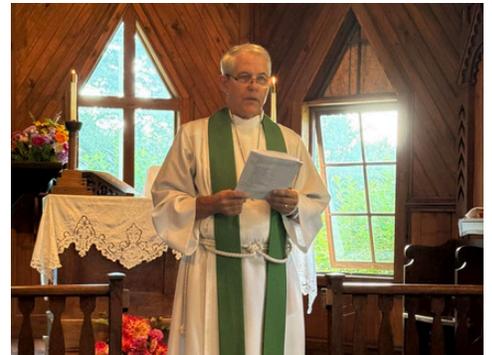


Photo credits: Angela Williams



PARISH PROFILE

St. John's

The Chapel of St. John the Baptist of the Lower Watauga (known simply as St. John's) is a summer mission of Holy Cross. This beautifully restored one-room church, originally built in 1861, draws a number of visitors and regular Holy Cross members each summer. Although the liturgy is traditional, the location allows for a more casual experience. The post-service social hour is held on the shaded lawn in front of the church. St. John's is located approximately three miles from Holy Cross. Sunday services are held Memorial Day through Labor Day at 9:00 with the Holy Cross Rector presiding. Average attendance in 2024 was 49.

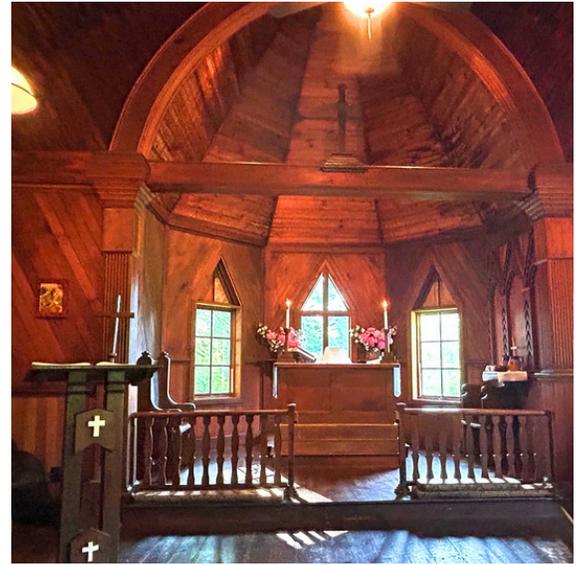


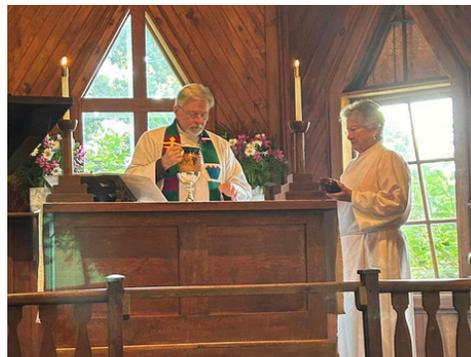
Photo credit: Angela Williams

Streaming Services

When COVID-19 hit in 2020, Holy Cross began streaming Sunday morning services. While the church was closed to in-person services during the height of the pandemic, the priest and curate videotaped a Eucharist every week to be uploaded to YouTube for Sunday broadcast. Later, when our curate's tenure was up, the priest and a chalice videotaped a Morning Prayer service to be broadcast on Sundays. When Holy Cross re-opened to in-person services, live streaming of the 11:00 Sunday Eucharist began, and continues.



Photo credit: Angela Williams





PARISH PROFILE

Online Compline

We also began offering Compline five nights a week via Zoom during the pandemic. That group continues to gather twice a week, and anywhere from eight to 10 people typically join.

Music Ministry

Holy Cross Music Director and Organist, Shane Watson, leads a vocal choir and a handbell choir. The vocal choir is active throughout the year, with the exception of the month of July, and the handbell choir performs occasionally, particularly during Easter and Advent seasons. A rich and varied selection of music enhances the Holy Cross worship service. Music at St. John's tends toward older, well-known songs and hymns. Accompaniment is varied and is provided by church and community musicians.



Photo credit: Angela Williams

Lay Participation in Worship

Numerous congregants are involved with preparing both churches for services as well as with participating in the services. Opportunities for involvement include the Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Linen Fairies, Greeters/Ushers, Altar Ministers, Acolytes, Lectors, Prayer Leaders, Healing Ministers, and Lay Eucharistic Ministers.



Photo credit: Angela Williams



PARISH PROFILE

Ministries

Holy Cross is known as “a little church that helps people.” Our ministries and outreach are central to this parish and very much characterize who we are and what we do. We seek to become a truly missional church, offering ourselves in service and living the mission of Christ. Our members are highly energetic, service-oriented, and are usually involved in multiple activities. A wonderful spirit of generosity pervades this congregation, both in service and in gifts.

Valle Crucis United Methodist Church & the Valle Crucis School

While we were fortunate that the Holy Cross facilities sustained little damage from Hurricane Helene in late September 2024, many in our community suffered devastating loss. The Valle Crucis United Methodist Church and the Valle Crucis School experienced major damage. We have been honored to offer our sanctuary to the Methodists for their services, which take place at 9:00 on Sunday mornings, thus obviating the Holy Cross 8:30 a.m. service.



When their renovations are complete, we expect to resume 8:30 a.m. services from Labor Day through Memorial Day.

Led by our interim rector, the Reverend Robert Hartmans, and Margaret Love, Executive Director of the Valle Crucis Conference Center (VCCC)*, along with their respective staffs, sections of Skiles Hall and the Conference Center buildings were transformed into classrooms for the Valle Crucis School to finish the 2024-25 school year. Between Holy Cross and the VCCC, 207 children were educated and cared for for eight months. **As of this writing, the Valle Crucis School will be reprising their residency in Skiles Hall and the VCCC for at least part of the 2025-2026 school year.**

*The VCCC is a also a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Western NC.



PARISH PROFILE

Valle Country Fair (VCF)

More than 50 years ago, the parishioners of Holy Cross created the Valle Country Fair as a fund raiser, with every penny of profit to be given back to the community. Held on the third Saturday of October, the Fair offers over 100 juried craft vendors, numerous food tents, and continuous mountain music. Church members plan and manage the Fair, and with the help of friends, volunteers, and community partners, host the day-long celebration. Attendance has grown to well over 9,000, with net revenues averaging greater than \$65,000.

The VCF has raised over \$1.2 million since its inception. Half the proceeds are distributed via grants to local non-profits and half to needy individuals and families throughout the year through our Mission & Outreach Commission (MOC).

One of the challenges for the coming years is addressing the sustainability of the VCF. As the Holy Cross parish age rises, volunteers from community partners become increasingly important. The VCF is a much-beloved ministry of Holy Cross; its viability is vital to the parish's understanding of itself.

Photo credits: Catherine Morton





PARISH PROFILE

Mission & Outreach Commission (MOC)

The Mission & Outreach Commission is a visible and tangible demonstration of Holy Cross's dedication to the Lord's teaching to love and serve Him by helping others. Half of the proceeds from the Valle Country Fair provide emergency assistance by keeping our neighbors on their jobs, in their homes, and with heat in their houses. Through the other half of the fair proceeds, the MOC has provided community grants for many needs, including children's programs, health and hunger needs, sustainable farming training for veterans, immigration justice and connections, low cost legal services, leadership development and recreational opportunities for teens, a community drug recovery program, a program for grandparents and others fostering children, and housing building materials and training.

Holy Cross MOC serves three counties: Watauga, Avery, and Ashe. The nine-member team meets monthly. Calls for assistance are taken year-round, with "call duty" rotating among the members a week at a time. The MOC also organizes the annual Angel Tree.

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Rooted in our past and growing into God's future, the ECW exists to support all the women of Holy Cross in their mission and ministry in the world. Our vision is that we become a vibrant blend of all ages, coming together as a peacemaking, healing part of the Church. We aspire to be a God spark, shining and sharing the love of Christ. Our goals are to strengthen lines of communication with our local and national sisters, to support our home parish, and to serve God through outreach and service to others.

Our ECW meets on the 2nd Sunday of every month in Skiles Hall. The organization awards college scholarships to graduating high school seniors; contributes financially to seminary students; prepares jams, jellies, and baked goods for the Valle Country Fair; hosts a variety of fundraisers; serves the congregation an Easter Brunch; and provides set up, clean up, beverages, and food for funeral/memorial receptions. We also have potluck dinners and speakers from local non-profits and charities.



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Daughters of the King (DOK)

The St. Helena Chapter of the Daughters of the King was established in 1984 and has a current membership of 19, with approximately ten active women. Our DOK meet weekly on Wednesdays for prayer and study. Traditionally, a simple healing Eucharistic -- in the chancel and open to all -- follows the meeting. The DOK is charged with praying for the parish priest and the parish (especially for the names on the church prayer list), for the diocese, and for the national church.

Presbyterian-Episcopal Campus Ministry (PECM)

Holy Cross joins other local congregations to support this organization on Appalachian State University's campus. The Diocese of Western North Carolina provides a priest to work with this group of students as they journey together through fellowship, worship, and life experiences.

Summer Food Ministry

Every summer parishioners from Holy Cross and the Valle Crucis United Methodist Church collect and deliver groceries to 10-14 families with children who attend the Valle Crucis School and who, because school is out, are experiencing food insecurity. Members of the churches donate food, which is packed up every three weeks and delivered by parishioners to the families' doorsteps.

Men's Night Out (MNO)

MNO is a monthly opportunity for men from Holy Cross and the High Country to enjoy an evening of fellowship together. This group was begun at Holy Cross, but has grown to include parishioners from other churches and friends of all. The locations, hosts, and menus vary from month-to-month. The goal is simply fellowship and good times!





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St. John's Summer Concerts

Holy Cross has used St. John's as a venue for a summer concert series which has featured local area musical talent. Our aim is to provide summer entertainment and fellowship for a wider group of community people, all within the ambiance of a beautiful, historic setting. The music groups are varied - from early music consortiums to Celtic rock and everything in between. **The St. John's Summer Concert Series is currently on hiatus, but there are hopes that it can be revived.**

Family Fellowship

Holy Cross parishioners love to get together! We seize every opportunity to create a gathering and share refreshments. Opportunities for fellowship include occasional parish breakfasts, potluck dinners, and Feast Days after church meals. You haven't lived until you've tried the breakfast sausage casserole.



Wild Blue Yonder





PARISH PROFILE

Community Partnerships

Holy Cross is truly a loving, caring, active, and energetic family, always at the ready to participate in a new activity. Compassionate and open minded to people and issues, we wish to meaningfully connect with each other and with those in our mountain community. Many of our outreach activities are supported and assisted by the connections we have with others in the larger community. The High Country community is built on relationships centered around helping each other, and we are grateful to share that spirit with our neighbors.

Valle Crucis Conference Center (VCCC)

Sharing a parking lot and over a century of interweaving lives, Holy Cross and VCCC have been partners in a ministry of hospitality since an Episcopal presence was first established in the Valle, circa 1842. Known to locals as the “Old Mission School,” VCCC was a school in a previous life; now it welcomes groups of all sorts from all over the southeast US and beyond. The largest group hosted is the North American Academy of Piping & Drumming – a five-week bagpipe academy that runs from mid-June through July. VCCC staff and guests have contributed to the life of the parish since its inception, and Holy Cross parishioners have worked and played on Mission School grounds for over a century. Separate missions hold one heart for service and ministry. The VCCC has five lodging buildings and three dedicated meeting spaces, and can host up to approximately 120 guests. The Dining Hall serves three delicious meals per day. (vconferences.org)





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Valle Crucis Community Park (VCCP)

Just a mile down the road, the Valle Crucis Community Park is a mainstay of this community, offering gorgeous walking trails, playgrounds, fields, Watauga River access, and pavilions for gatherings. The Valle Crucis Park Summer Concert Series brings hundreds of people together every Friday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, to enjoy music, fellowship, and picnics. Holy Cross and the VCCC co-sponsor one of those concert Fridays. (vallecrucispark.org)

Valle Crucis School

Valle Crucis School educates and cares for over 300 students from Pre-K through eighth grade. Holy Cross sponsors an Angel Tree for Valle Crucis School students during the Christmas season and hosts events for the students, including a Mardi Gras dinner, Saint Nicholas visit, and other fun programs. The Valle Crucis School PTO assists with the Valle Country Fair.

Cub Scout Pack #160

Holy Cross sponsors Cub Scout Pack #160, which meets in Bishop Ives Cabin on Sundays at 2:00 p.m. The co-ed troop is open to all children from kindergarten through fifth grade. They enjoy exploring nature, learning leadership and integrity, building things, camping, learning outdoor skills, playing games - and, of course, earning badges.





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Hospitality House

Hospitality House, a regional nonprofit homeless services agency, works in seven rural North Carolina counties (Watauga, Wilkes, Ashe, Avery, Alleghany, Mitchell, Yancey) providing housing, shelter, hunger relief, homeless prevention, street outreach, counseling, and crisis assistance. Holy Cross supports Hospitality House by providing monthly dinners and offering financial and other types of assistance throughout the year. Hospitality House is one of the larger grant recipients of the Valle Country Fair and works with the Holy Cross MOC to connect people in need to Holy Cross resources. (hosphouse.org)

Hunger & Health Coalition

The Hunger and Health Coalition provides food, pharmacy, and other types of assistance to those in need in the greater Watauga County and surrounding area. Holy Cross parishioners regularly support the food distribution program, *A Simple Gesture*, by using specially-provided bags and filling them with non-perishable foods. Parish volunteers take the bags from the parish hall and deliver them to the Coalition, which distributes food to those in need. (hungerandhealthcoalition.org)





PARISH PROFILE

Our Heritage

We treasure the heritage of Holy Cross in Valle Crucis. Holy Cross has had a presence in this valley for 183 years. Ours is a living history that has been strongly influenced by early missionaries, particularly Bishop Levi Silliman Ives and William West Skiles. The Episcopal mission in Valle Crucis began in 1842 when Bishop Ives proposed making this valley an important center of work for the Diocese. To do this, the Bishop bought 2,000 acres of property with his own money and established a missionary station, a training school for the ministry, and a classical and agricultural school for boys.



The Right Rev. Levi Silliman Ives

In 1847, Bishop Ives established The Society of the Holy Cross, the first Monastic Order in the Anglican Communion since the English Reformation of the mid-sixteenth century. The only remaining building from that time is the Bishop Ives Cabin which sits directly across from the church and now serves as a reading room, small meeting room, and archival museum. Also influential was William West Skiles, who was hired by Bishop Ives to head the agricultural program and was later ordained as Deacon.

Brother Skiles served this community in many ways, by preaching, teaching, tending to the sick, and as postmaster. It was his persistence and dedication that led to the building of the Chapel of St. John the Baptist of the Lower Watauga in 1861. This building was beautifully renovated in 2009 and serves as a summer chapel for Holy Cross.





PARISH PROFILE

Holy Cross History

1862

Deacon William West Skiles dies after establishing St. John's Church

1926

The beautiful stone church is built at Hwy. 194 and Skiles Way

1979

Parishioners start the Valle Country Fair as a small country bazaar

2024

Hurricane Helene devastates the High Country; Holy Cross steps up for the Valle Crucis School, the Valle Crucis United Methodist Church, and the wider community

1842

Bishop Levi Silliman Ives purchases land for establishing an Anglican order and school

1895

Bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire, Jr. re-establishes the Mission School and Holy Cross Church

1940

Catastrophic flood impacts the High Country, with massive loss of property and lives

1998

Skiles Hall is renovated to accommodate a rapidly growing congregation





PARISH PROFILE

Valle Crucis & the High Country

The Church of the Holy Cross sits in one of the most beautiful places on earth. Nestled in the “Vale of the Cross,” Valle Crucis takes its name from the outline of a St. Andrew’s cross that Bishop Ives saw in the valley’s crossing riverbeds. The valley is centrally located in the High Country of North Carolina, an area that combines extraordinary natural beauty with a pleasant climate and numerous cultural, educational, and recreational amenities.

We are located in Watauga County (population 54,000) and are closely adjacent to Avery County (population 17,800). Several towns are within 20 miles, including Boone, Blowing Rock, Banner Elk, Linville, and Newland. Combined, they represent a closely connected mountain community. Holy Cross members come from all these locations, and not a few from even longer distances, including nearby Tennessee. We have a sizeable number of summer residents who own second homes nearby and attend when they are “in the mountains.”

The community of Valle Crucis (vallecrucis.com) is a loosely designated area of approximately 25 square miles. The Church of the Holy Cross and adjacent Valle Crucis Conference Center, both of which overlook the actual “vale of the cross,” are among the best known landmarks. Other important community centers include the historic Mast General Store, the new Valle Crucis School, and the Valle Crucis Community Park. These areas of the community comprise the first designated Rural NC Historical District.

There are about a dozen small retail businesses, several Bed and Breakfast establishments, and two horse farms, plus a host of agricultural enterprises in the community. Latest census figures show that approximately 243 people live full-time in the Valle, with many more seasonal residents. As is true of much of the High Country, many second homes are located in our mountains.





PARISH PROFILE

Valle Crucis & the High Country

Approximately 13 miles to the east is Boone, Watauga County seat and home to **Appalachian State University** (ASU) (appstate.edu). The town of Boone boasts about 35,000 inhabitants, 21,000 of which are ASU students. ASU has over 150 undergraduate and 80 graduate majors. Banner Elk, six miles to the southwest, is home to **Lees-McRae College** (lmc.edu), a private liberal arts college that offers 27 major programs of study and has more than 900 students.

Valle Crucis and the surrounding area is known for its year-round recreational activities. Opportunities for camping, hiking, and skiing abound. There are over 150 miles of hiking and biking trails and greenways between Watauga and Avery Counties. Cultural events are plentiful – ASU hosts many diverse and vibrant arts programs that enrich the cultural and intellectual climate of the campus and region (thearts.appstate.edu). The High Country is chock-full of festivals, concerts, delicious places to eat, and fun activities, many of which are described through the Boone Tourism & Development Authority website, exploreboone.com.

The presence of ASU also helps ensure the quality of Watauga County schools. Watauga County School District is consistently rated as one of the best districts in the state.

The area is well served by the Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, which includes two area hospitals, Watauga Medical Center in Boone and the Charles A. Cannon Jr. Memorial Hospital in Linville. A wide array of medical specialists are also available locally (unchealthappalachian.org). Major hospitals and more specialized services are accessible in Winston-Salem and Charlotte, both of which are about 90 miles away.



Lees-McRae





PARISH PROFILE

The Episcopal Diocese of Western NC

Walk in the Way of Jesus! **Widen the Walls** by welcoming all people - no exceptions! **Wake up the World** to the grace and mercy of God!

The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina (EDWNC) formally began in 1922, when the Missionary District of Asheville, a part of the Diocese of North Carolina, became a separate and independent Diocese of its own. Comprised of over 15,000 members, the Diocese includes the 28 westernmost counties of North Carolina. The Diocese consists of 63 year-round congregations, four summer chapels, two conference/retreat centers (Lake Logan Episcopal Center and Valle Crucis Conference Center) a wonderful summer camp (Camp Henry), Deerfield Retirement Community, and Christ Episcopal School.

The foundation of The Episcopal Church in the Blue Ridge Mountains is built upon a fundamental appreciation of the sacred nature of our geography, the perseverance of the early settlers, the humility of our missionaries, and the pioneering spirit of those who worked to exemplify the radical hospitality of God's love to all people. Located in the Biltmore Village area of Asheville, the Cathedral of All Souls is the cathedral for the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. It is the seat of our Bishop, the Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin, a spiritual home to all Episcopalians in Western North Carolina, and a house of prayer for all people.



Hurricane Helene hit Western NC on September 27, 2024. The Cathedral of All Souls was flooded, and as of this writing is still closed for major repairs. The EDWNC has focused tremendous resources on repairing not only the physical damage across our region, but also bringing communities back together. The EDWNC Disaster Response Hub offers resources, volunteer support, and donation directions (diocesewnc.org/helene).



PARISH PROFILE

Bishop José McLoughlin

José Antonio McLoughlin was consecrated as the seventh Bishop, and first Latino, of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina on October 1, 2016. Prior to his election as bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina, José served as the Canon to the Ordinary and Chief-of-Staff for the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma since 2008. Previously, José served congregations in the Dioceses of Southeast Florida and Virginia.



Ordained in 2005, José earned his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Central Florida and his Masters in Divinity from Virginia Theological Seminary. Prior to his call to the priesthood, José worked in the criminal justice field serving in Florida as a police officer and in the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. in various capacities, most recently as the Special Assistant/Senior Advisor to the Assistant Attorney General.

While not disregarding the great traditions of the Episcopal Church, Bishop José believes that changes are necessary in the ways the Church ministers in our day, and many of those changes must originate from the ministry of the Bishop. He has to be a “hands-on” Bishop who is close to the people of the Diocese and the clergy who serve them. He has committed to being fully engaged in the Church’s ministry with youth, minorities, and underserved populations. He is passionate about raising up a new kind of leadership for the Church.

José and his wife, Laurel, have two children: Alexander and Alyson. Alex graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in sports media and a minor in Spanish. Alex and his wife, Rachel, live in Oklahoma City where Alex works for the Oklahoma City Baseball Club, the triple-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers. Alyson graduated from UNC Charlotte with a degree in criminal justice and a minor in religious studies and sociology. Alyson works and lives in Charlotte.

Born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Bishop José is bilingual and he enjoys listening to music, playing the drums, and studying 18th-century American history. A life-long aviation enthusiast, Bishop José is working on earning his private pilot’s license.



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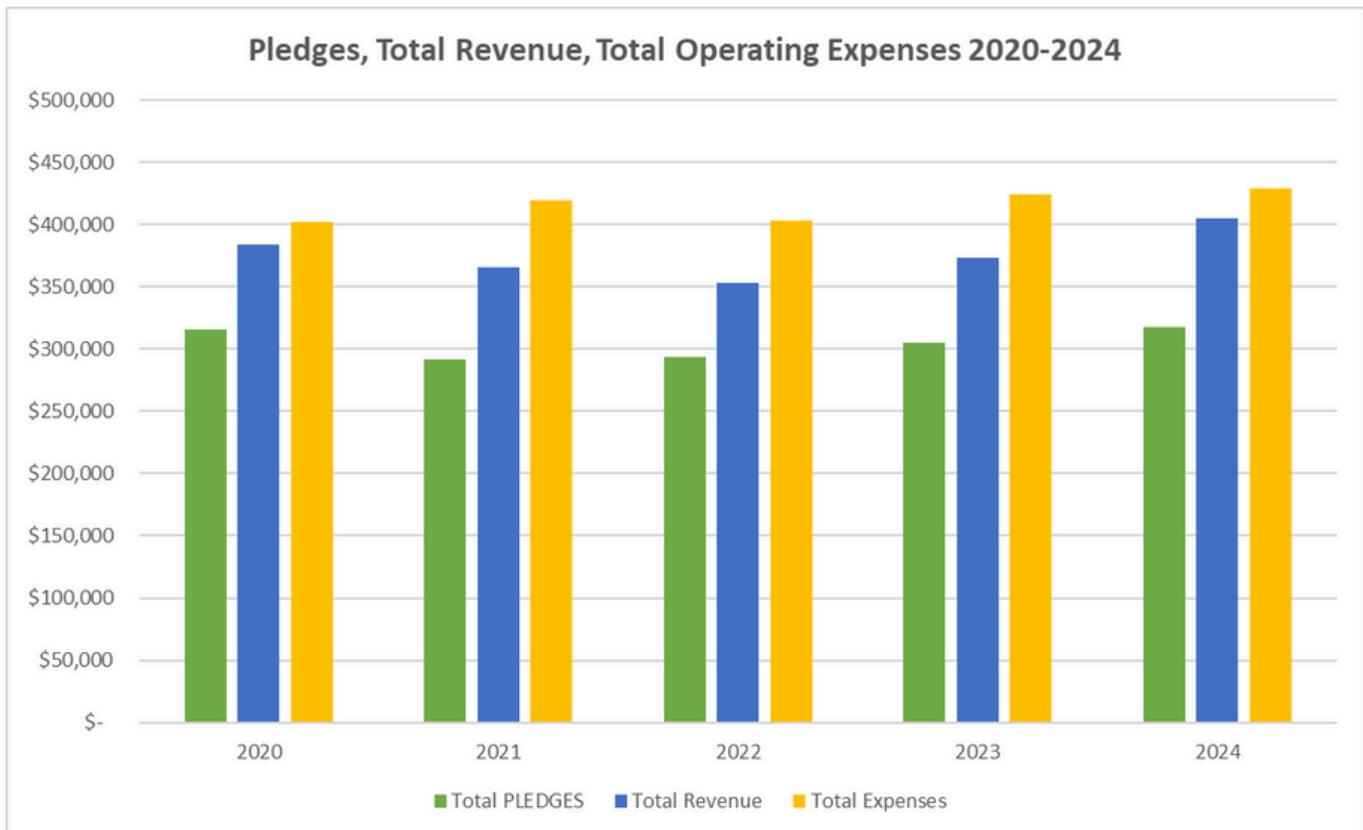
Stewardship & Finance

The parish counts approximately 498 confirmed members and 186 active members (37.7%), with 25-35 non-member congregants, including summer residents. Approximately 230 (46.2%) are above 60 years of age. There are currently 25 (5.1%) youth under the age of 15.

Holy Cross Five Year Financial Summary

Operating Revenue	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total PLEDGES	\$ 315,675	\$ 291,358	\$ 293,799	\$ 304,736	\$ 317,667
Total OTHER Income	\$ 68,580	\$ 74,210	\$ 59,817	\$ 68,926	\$ 87,246
Total Revenue	\$ 384,255	\$ 365,568	\$ 353,616	\$ 373,662	\$ 404,913

Operating Expenses	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Expenses	\$ 401,981	\$ 419,588	\$ 402,734	\$ 423,953	\$ 428,992

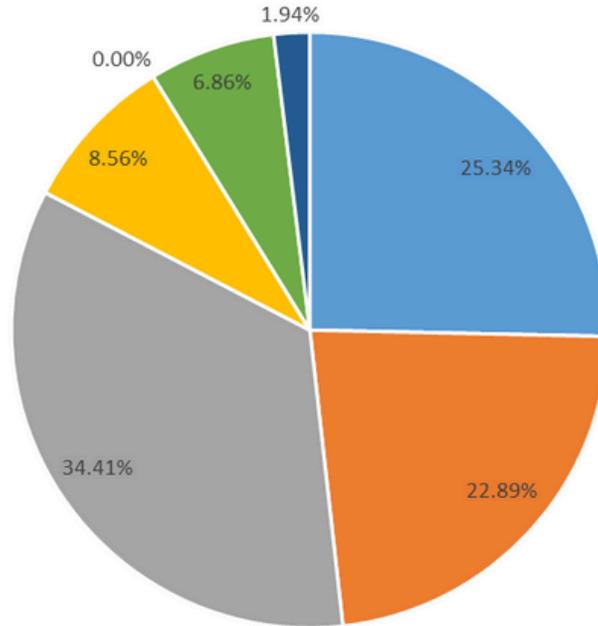




PARISH PROFILE

Stewardship & Finance

2024 Operating Expenses - \$428,992



- Rector's Compensation
- Staff Salaries
- Operations
- Diocesan Pledge
- Associate Priest
- Budgeted Outreach
- Activities & Programs

Holy Cross parishioners are dedicated to stewardship in all forms. Although relatively small in number, members are truly committed to supporting the Church's mission and activities, with active service, annual pledges, and by honoring those pledges. In our recent Congregational Assessment Tool Survey, the data shows that Holy Cross falls in the 96th percentile nationwide in the average percent of income pledged, at 6.11%. This is an extraordinary figure and speaks well of the dedication of Holy Cross parishioners.

From 2025 C.A.T. Survey

Total church income	\$ 639,481.00
Contribution per household	\$ 9,007.00
Average household income	\$ 147,397.00
Average percent of income given	6.11%
Percentile rank	96th percentile



PARISH PROFILE

Buildings & Grounds

*H*oly Cross Church is of a Gothic design built in 1925 of native stone, with a seating capacity of around 200. Situated on approximately seven acres, it has a commanding view of the rolling fields and the surrounding mountains. There is a large Celtic cross on the west end of the building. As one drives by the church, its red door is a welcome sign to stop and enjoy the beauty of the peaceful valley.



The church sanctuary is modeled on an English country church, with oak paneling, stucco walls, exposed roof beams, simple stained glass windows, and a pipe organ. A small graveyard and a Memorial Garden for cremation ashes are adjacent to the church building, and below the church is a beautiful Columbarium. Holy Cross sanctuary is always open for those seeking a quiet place for prayers and meditation.



*S*kiles Hall, built in 1979 and renovated in 1998, is located adjacent to the church and provides dining facilities, space for Sunday School classrooms and nursery, program space, a commercial kitchen, choir room, clergy and office space, and a youth chapel. The kitchen and storage areas were renovated in 2022, with the purpose of serving Holy Cross' several food ministries.

*B*ishop Ives Cabin, located directly across from the church, survives from the earliest days of Bishop Ives' time in the valley. It now serves as an historical museum, providing reading and meeting spaces, and housing for Holy Cross and Valle Crucis archives.





PARISH PROFILE

Buildings & Grounds



Photo credit: Casey Miller

The parish rectory is located in a beautiful wooded area within a short walking distance of the church and one mile from the Valle Crucis historical district and school. It is an attractive and comfortable two-story house on a large hillside lot with four bedrooms. Originally built in the 1960s, it was extensively remodeled in 2010, then again in 2024. There is a free standing two-car garage and additional enclosed storage space. The yard is fenced.

St. John the Baptist Church operates as a summer chapel by Holy Cross, holding worship services at 9:00 each Sunday in the summer between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This rustic chapel was built in 1860 by William West Skiles and his congregation, a labor of love for a small community. Perched on a hillside, the church is surrounded by the breathtaking mountain woodlands of Valle Crucis. The graveyard is gorgeous, with a sweeping view across the headstones. Deacon William West Skiles is interred here, his grave marked with a large Celtic cross.



@Fleming Photography

St. John's Church is located three miles from Holy Cross, whose congregation has tended this historical treasure for decades.



PARISH PROFILE

The Rector We Seek

We have thought and prayed and prayed some more. We have gathered together in Holy Conversations with most of our attending congregation, both through survey and in person, and have identified specific aspects of ministry and leadership we ask of our next rector. This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but it may clarify and simplify the priorities for our parish.

- 1. An ability and interest in creating a family life ministry that is effective in attracting parents, children, and youth.**

Leader

As many of us at Holy Cross are getting older, we have begun to set the stage for a "next generation." 90% of our respondents want more younger people and families. Meanwhile, Holy Cross' current (and still very lively) generation requires its own care and cannot be overlooked.

Compassionate

- 2. Appreciative of a variety of theological perspectives but intellectually resonant with a moderately progressive perspective.**

In other words, a bold preacher, but not a reckless one. A skilled and creative liturgist. A rector who understands that Holy Cross parishioners span the panoply of theological, political, and social perspectives, and who respects those differences. **A pastor to all.**

Enthusiastic

Challenging

- 3. A leader who brings contagious energy to inspire new and existing leadership and involvement.**

We want a rector who challenges us to rise to leadership - someone who energizes us into creating opportunities for everyone to make each one of us heard.

Dynamic

Kind

- 4. Enthusiastic about expanding outreach ministries that provide direct services to those living on the margins of society.**

The High Country is not immune to human suffering; we want a rector who calls us insistently to live out our Baptismal promise of "respecting the dignity of every human," and who instructs us to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (*Galatians 6:2*)

Faithful



PARISH PROFILE

How to Apply

Discernment Committee

Jane Blackburn (Chair)
John Goodrich
Dawn Harris
Sis Kinney
Jim Logan
Margaret Love
Randy McDonough
Mary Pietan

To apply for the position of Rector at Holy Cross Church, please send the following to Canon Augusta Anderson, canonaugusta@diocesewnc.org:

- A Letter of Interest expressing how you feel called to Holy Cross
(*addressed to the Discernment Committee but mailed to Canon Anderson*)
- Your résumé
- Your OTM Portfolio
- **Application deadline is Monday, November 3, 2025.**



Photo credit: Angela Williams



Photo credit: Angela Williams



Photo credit: Catherine Morton